

2026 Badwater 135 Race Rules and National Park Service Regulations

Legal and Bureaucratic

1. If the event is canceled due to pandemic, extreme weather, community disaster, or other *force majeure*, neither refunds nor credits will be given.
2. BADWATER® is a federally registered trademark owned by AdventureCORPS, Inc. Personal crew t-shirts, fundraising shirts, and similar items may not have "Badwater" on them, or feature any version of the official race logos and artwork.
3. The final, exact route is subject to approval from various government agencies and is always subject to change due to various factors beyond the control of the organizers.
4. All applicants must be a minimum of 18 years in age when applying to race.
5. All Competitors and all crew members must complete and sign the Accident Waiver and Release of Liability / Release of Name and Likeness, along with the properly completed Check-In Form and Medical History Form.
6. No commercial photography or videography may be conducted at the race without the specific written permission of AdventureCORPS. Additionally, the National Park Service, California Department of Transportation and/or the U.S. Forest Service may also require commercial filming permits.
7. Bona fide media must contact AdventureCORPS to request a media credential and must attend the Media Briefing prior to the race. (Competitors with personal media must embed that media within their crew.)
8. The National Park Service - which has jurisdiction over the first 86.5 miles of the race route - regulates photography and videography if it makes an impact on Park resources or other Park visitors. Please visit [nps.gov/deva/](https://www.nps.gov/deva/) for information.
9. All Competitors must be willing to submit to drug tests before (at any point prior to the race, after being officially confirmed for entry), during, or after the race (up to 90 days after the conclusion of the race). If any WADA banned substances are detected, the Competitor will be disqualified from competition, listed as DISQUALIFIED FOR DOPING in the final standings of the race, and banned for life from AdventureCORPS events. Refusal to submit for drug testing upon demand will also result in the Competitor being disqualified from competition, being listed as DISQUALIFIED FOR DOPING in the final standings of the race and being banned for life from any AdventureCORPS event. Additionally, any Badwater 135 finisher who fails a drug test within 12 months after competing in Badwater 135 will be retroactively disqualified from all previous Badwater 135 races and banned for life from AdventureCORPS events.

General Race Rules

1. The race begins in three waves at 2000, 2100, and 2200. Competitors must check in at the start line, ready to race, 30 minutes prior to their start time.
2. Starting waves are assigned by the race director.
3. The two divisions are men's and women's. The Competitor to arrive at the finish line in each division with the lowest overall time, based on their starting time, is the winner.
4. Competitors must follow the official race route.
5. The race number bib must be worn by the Competitor on the front of the body, unmodified, unfolded, and always visible. It may not be worn on the head or hat. Pacer Bib numbers must be worn similarly.
6. The clock does not stop for any reason until the race course officially closes 45 hours after each wave start time.
7. Competitors must make their presence known at all Time Checkpoints.
8. Nighttime is defined as 1900 to 0700.
9. Competitors must proceed beyond the following locations within these time limits:
 - Mile 50.8 (2000' Elevation Sign, 8.6 miles beyond Stovepipe Wells): All Competitors must pass by 1000, Tuesday morning.
 - Mile 72.8 (Panamint Springs Resort): All Competitors must pass by 1900, Tuesday evening.
 - Mile 90.7 (Darwin Turn-Off): All Competitors must pass by 0330, Wednesday morning.
 - Beyond the Darwin Checkpoint, if it becomes clear that a Competitor will not be able to finish the race officially within the 45-hour time limit, that Competitor may be forced to withdraw from the race prior to the actual conclusion of the 45 hours.
 - Mile 122.8 (Lone Pine Dow Villa Motel): All Competitors must pass within 40 hours, based upon individual start time.
10. Competitors who miss specified time cut-offs along the course, or who are otherwise disqualified, must withdraw from the race course along with their support crews; they may not continue "unofficially" such as after removing the bib number.
11. Running must always be single file, on the far left side of the road or off the left side of the road, facing traffic (Pacers, too). Pass other Competitors quickly.
12. Competitors must progress under their own power without helping, pushing, supporting, or any other type of physical assistance from their crew or other Competitors.
13. Drafting is allowed, provided both (or all) runners are willing.
14. Walking sticks, ski poles, and the like are not allowed.
15. Do not litter, mar, or pollute the landscape or environment.
16. Always display courtesy, good taste, decorum, and sportsmanship. Nudity is not allowed.

Support Crew Organization

1. The names and email addresses of the Crew Chief and all support crew members must be provided at least 60 days before the race.
2. Crew Chiefs must study all race rules and information about supporting a Competitor and organizing and overseeing a support team, as well as study all email correspondence sent by the race organizers. Crew Chiefs are primarily responsible for managing the support crew, maintaining adherence to all race rules, state and local laws, and common sense, as well as overseeing the health and safety of all crew members and the Competitor.
3. All crew members must study all race rules and information about supporting a Competitor and organizing a support team, as well as study all email correspondence sent by the race organizers.
4. Competitors are strongly encouraged to bring a nurse, EMT, MD or other medical professional on his or her support team.
5. Competitors are strongly encouraged to bring at least one crew member with Badwater 135 experience.
6. Support Vehicle Drivers must be fully licensed.
7. Competitors and all their Support Team must view the Online Pre-Race Meeting held prior to the in-person events in Lone Pine. (A code will be given out during the online meeting to prove it was viewed.)
8. Competitors and all Crew Chiefs attend Competitor Check-In and the Pre-Race Meeting in Lone Pine, while all crew members are encouraged to attend both events.

Mandatory Gear (Must be Shown at Competitor Check-In)

1. Competitors must pay the Death Valley National Park Entrance Fee for their support vehicle or provide proof of an NPS annual pass. (This is most easily done prior to the race by paying online at Recreation.gov.) Proof must be brought to Competitor Check-In.
2. A minimum of two running-style reflective vests – which will be worn and utilized by the Competitor and Pacer (if a Pacer is used) during nighttime periods – and a minimum of 10-14 blinking lights for all Competitors, Pacers, and crew members to wear at night.
3. One OSHA Class 3 reflectivity garment for each crew member to wear at all times. See point 7 under “Support Crew & Assistance” below.
4. A minimum of eight personal portable toilet products such as the Biffy Bag for whenever toilets are not available. (Ziplock bags or dog poop bags are NOT acceptable.) Such products must be used discreetly and must be disposed of properly after use. Public and/or unsanitary defecation by Competitors or crew members will result in disqualification of the Competitor.
5. All Competitors must bring one U.S. dollar (or more) in a sealed envelope to Competitor Check-In. Please write the Competitor number on the envelope. This envelope will not be returned, and the money will be donated to charity.

Support Crew, Assistance, and Gear / Clothing

1. All vehicle drivers must be fully licensed.
2. All vehicles must meet the minimum requirements of property damage and personal injury liability automobile insurance for the State of California.
3. Each Competitor must be accompanied by their own support crew comprised of no more than one four-wheeled motor vehicle and two to four crew members - at least two of whom are legally licensed to drive and at least one of whom can speak English - at all times. (Crew and support vehicles may not be shared, except informally in the spirit of the event, i.e., crews may lend assistance to other Competitors or crews. Exceptions may be made for married couples or others who have a history of racing together and would like to race with one shared crew. Please inquire.)
4. Race Competitors may have no more than one support vehicle and no more than four crew members in total on the race course. A secondary vehicle may not be used to shuttle crew members or supplies to and from the Competitor.
5. The minimum age to be on a Badwater 135 support crew - or to ride in a support vehicle - is 13, with these additional conditions: a) Any crew member under the age of 18 (a “minor”) must have ultramarathon crewing experience, which must be submitted at least 30 days ahead of the race for consideration by the race organizers. b) The support crew must also include at least two adults who are licensed to drive. c) The parent or legal guardian of the minor crew member must also be on the support crew or be the runner for whom they are crewing. d) The parent or legal guardian of the minor must sign the event waiver on behalf of the minor.
6. Family, friends, sponsors, and associates of Competitors may only be present in Lone Pine and the finish line; they may not be present or drive on the race course except between Lone Pine and the finish line and that drive must be made without stopping.
7. ALL support crew members (except those actively pacing their Competitor) must always wear OSHA Class 3 high-visibility / reflectivity clothing. These regulations may ONLY be met by wearing the special garments developed by ZZYXXZ in collaboration with BADWATER and which can be pre-ordered for pick-up at Competitor Check-In, OR by wearing certified OSHA Class 3 shirts. Please note: Class 3 garments have sleeves with reflective stripes, while Class 2 garments do not have sleeves with stripes (and thus are not allowed.) Also note: Running-type reflective vests, such as those by Nathan Sports, do NOT meet OSHA Class 3 requirements.
8. Competitors and Pacers may dress as they choose during daylight.
9. At night, Competitors and Pacers must wear 360-degree reflectivity (such as reflective running vests) and front and rear blinky lights. Competitors and Pacers are not required to wear the specific OSHA Class 3 garments that are required for all crew members, although they are highly recommended for Competitors and Pacers, too.

10. In addition to the requisite reflective garments, all crew members, Pacers, and Competitors must wear front and rear blinky lights whenever they are outside of a motor vehicle during nighttime.

11. High-tech "cooling vests," "cooling hats or visors," or other types of artificial / technological cooling systems may not be worn or utilized by Competitors while making forward progress. (Ice, wet towels, hand-held water sprayers or misters, modern fabrics, and similar are acceptable and are commonly used. What is not allowed are products or technology whose sole purpose is to keep the Competitor "artificially cool.")

12. Competitors may not utilize an umbrella or shade cover while moving forward (other than a hat and clothing.)

13. All shoes must be declared in advance during Competitor Check-In and all shoes worn by Competitors must have been widely commercially available at least 60 days prior to the race.

14. Any crew member running along - for more than few moments - with their Competitor is considered a Pacer and must wear the Pacer's designated number bib.

15. If a Competitor is running with a Pacer, any additional crew members that are handing off supplies, or otherwise providing aid, must be off the roadway at all times (i.e. on the shoulder) and may not run along with the Competitor and Pacer for more than a few moments.

16. Pacers may not run in front of, even slightly, Competitors. (Pacers may run next to their Competitor briefly, when handing off supplies or spraying their Competitor, but only on the left side.)

17. No more than two crew members, including a Pacer if one is present, may be on the left side (Competitors' side) of the highway at any given time. (See "Geography" section below for an exception.)

18. Wheeled conveyances such as in-line skates, skateboards, strollers, and bicycles are prohibited. Competitors accompanied by any such conveyance will be disqualified.

19. Drones are illegal within Death Valley National Park boundaries, as well as at the finish line within the Inyo National Forest.

Support Vehicles: Signage, Driving, Parking, Crewing

1. The California Motor Vehicle Code, and all local, county, and/or federal laws, rules, and regulations must be respected at all times.

2. Drivers are reminded that phones must only be used in a hands-free manner, seat belts must be worn by all vehicle occupants at all times while moving, and it is illegal to drive on a highway while displaying emergency flashers.

3. Support vehicles may not be wider than 82" in width (not including mirrors), or more than 84" in height, per official manufacturer specifications. Minivans are most highly recommended, followed by medium sized SUVs. Oversize SUVs, extra large vans, large trucks, or other types of oversize vehicles are strongly discouraged (and usually not allowed.) Motorhomes, RVs, "SportsMobiles," Sprinter Vans (and similar, such as the Ram ProMaster), 15-passenger vans, Cyber

Trucks, and Hummers are specifically not allowed. Support vehicles may not pull trailers of any kind. See the Ideal Support Vehicle and Set-Up blog post at Badwater.com for further information.)

4. All support vehicles must have highly visible signage on the back of the vehicle stating "CAUTION RUNNERS." One-time use signs will be provided.

5. Sticky Competitor bib numbers will be provided to Competitors and must be displayed on all four sides of the support vehicle.

6. Sponsor / Charity names and graphics may not be placed on the front or back of support vehicles.

7. Vehicle windows may not be blocked or obstructed with any signage, paint, or similar.

8. Vehicle Decoration: Vehicles may not have any additional red or blue lights added to them which are visible while the vehicle is moving. (Red and blue lights are reserved for law enforcement and first responders.) Additionally, inflatable pool toys and other large decorative items may not be mounted to the roof of the vehicle.

9. Driving must be done at the speed of traffic, without slowing down to encourage, talk to, or aid any Competitor while moving. Handing of supplies from the vehicle is never allowed, nor is slowing down to speak with or to a Competitor or other person while moving. All assistance must be provided by pedestrian crew members.

10. Vehicles must "leapfrog" the Competitor at all times. Each "leapfrog" should generally be about two miles in length, perhaps less on mountain ascents. Competitors may never be "shadowed" (driving a vehicle at the Competitor's speed.) Driving must never be slow or at the speed of any Competitor.

11. All support vehicles must have their headlights on while driving, 24 hours a day.

12. While stopped or parked off the road, support vehicles must have their headlights turned off and emergency flashers turned on.

13. Vehicles must be parked completely off the road surface whenever they are stopped (with all four tires to the right of the white line).

14. Many areas of the route have very little shoulder for parking so care must be taken in choosing stopping places. When stopping/parking, vehicles may not stop on the left side of the road, except in parking lots or exceptionally large pullouts.

15. The doors on the left side of the vehicle must never be opened into the roadway. All exiting of the vehicle by active crew members must be from the right side of the vehicle; drivers may exit from left but only if space allows for them to do so without their door opening into the roadway.

16. Crew members must not stand on the left side of a parked vehicle (between the road and the vehicle.)

17. Support vehicles must not park across from other parked vehicles on the other side of the road (50 meters in either direction), to avoid bottlenecking the roadway.

Geography-Specific Rules: Harmony Curves & Father Crowley Ascent

1. Competitors may not be accompanied by Pacers until Mile 42 at the Stovepipe Wells time checkpoint. Exceptions: Competitors 65 or older may utilize a Pacer from Mile 3.5 (Natural Bridge turn-off.) Blind Competitors may utilize a Pacer / guide from the start line.
2. Support vehicles may not stop during the one-mile stretch beginning at Mile 19.1 (Harmony Borax Works) while Competitors run through the "Harmony Curves" section of Hwy 190. Each support vehicle should wait at Mile 19.1 long enough to allow the Competitor to cover the next, mostly uphill mile, and then drive ahead to Mile 20.1.
3. On the Father Crowley climb (the 12.1 miles from Panamint Springs Resort at Mile 72.8 to unmarked "Panamint Pass" at Mile 84.9), support vehicles may only stop at the EIGHT designated locations along the route. These are identified in the route book and with signage along the roadway. Along with race staff, this will be monitored by National Park Service staff who have the authority to disqualify Competitors. See Badwater.com for details and photos.
4. Crew members, other than Pacers, may never cross the roadway during the 12.1-mile Father Crowley climb from Panamint Springs Resort at Mile 72.8 to unmarked "Panamint Pass" at Mile 84.9. Also, each Competitor or Pacer is strongly encouraged to carry a walkie-talkie for communicating with the support crew during this stretch of the race route (and elsewhere on the route.)

Medical and Safety

1. At all times and in all situations, the top priority is the safety for all road users: Competitors, crew, staff, all other road users, and the general public.
2. Be vigilant: The roads are not closed for this event and may be quite busy with tourist and local traffic.
3. Competitors are responsible for both their own actions and their crew's actions; crews are responsible for both their own actions and their Competitor's actions.
4. Always look and listen both ways before crossing highways. Remember that drivers will not expect to encounter a Competitor or parked vehicle out on the course.
5. Competitors should not cross over the highway more than necessary; crew should cross the highway carefully to bring assistance to their Competitor - except on the Father Crowley climb as noted in the "Geography" section - rather than the Competitor crossing to the crew / vehicle. Dangerous crossing of, or behavior on, the roadway will not be tolerated.
6. Per National Park Service regulations, Competitors and crew members may not wear any headset covering the ears, or any earplugs in both ears, unless it is a necessary prosthetic device that aids the hearing-impaired.

7. All Competitors and crew must study "Medical Risks in the Badwater Ultramarathon," "Dangers of Running in the Heat," and "The Dangers of Hot Weather Running" at Badwater.com and/or in Badwater Magazine.

8. I.V.s (intravenous fluids) are not permitted during the race. If a Competitor receives an I.V. during the race, for any reason, then that Competitor is disqualified and must withdraw from the race.

9. Competitors and crew members may not use illegal drugs, stimulants, or dope, as well as alcohol of any kind, during the race or at any official race events or activities.

Following the Route, "Staking Out," Withdrawing

1. The entire course must be traveled by each Competitor. In the event of a routing error (e.g., wrong turn), the Competitor may be driven back to the exact original spot where he/she left the course and continue running from that location. There will be no allowance made for lost time or miles run in the wrong direction.

2. "Staking Out": If a Competitor needs to move up or down the course via motor vehicle for medical reasons, the support crew must mark the exact location by placing the provided numbered stake in the ground. (Put a blinky light and something bright on it to make it more visible.) The Competitor must then resume the race from the same place that he/she left it. Competitors may only leave or otherwise drive up or down the course via motor vehicle for medical attention, NOT simply to rest. This must be reported as soon as possible to Race Headquarters or the nearest time checkpoint. Competitors found in a moving motor vehicle will be disqualified unless they are en route to or from medical care. Focus must be kept on the speedy completion of the course.

3. If a Competitor withdraws, he/she or his/her crew must contact Race Headquarters or a Time Checkpoint immediately. Name, bib #, reason for withdrawal, time of withdrawal, and miles completed must be stated.

4. All Competitors and crews who withdraw from the race are encouraged to come to the finish line and the post-race party to greet and celebrate with their fellow Competitors and crews.

5. All Emergency Medicine and/or Emergency Evacuation costs for Competitors, crew members, or staff will be borne by that person or their heirs. The race organizers are in no way liable or responsible for medical care, nor responsible for emergency evacuation.

Awards

1. All Competitors will receive a Badwater 135 race t-shirt, hat, magazine, and a goodie bag with other Badwater items and products from the race sponsors, as well as entry into the post-race party for the Competitor and up to four crew members.

2. All Competitors who officially complete the event within 45 hours will receive a Badwater 135 Finisher t-shirt and commemorative Badwater 135 buckle.

Rule Enforcement and Penalties

1. Race rules are designed to provide a safe and fair experience for everyone and to help ensure our ability to produce the race again next year.
2. Major rule infractions by Competitors or their crew, especially those regarding “cheating,” will result in immediate disqualification of the Competitor.
3. Other, lesser offenses will result in the following cumulative time penalties:
 - A WARNING may be issued, depending on the nature of the infraction, at the discretion of the race official (A “slash” will be marked on the Competitor’s bib.)
 - First Penalty: 15 minutes in a few circumstances, but One Hour in most cases. (“X” will be marked on the competitor’s bib.)
 - Second Penalty: Disqualification
4. Time penalties are imposed by the penalized Competitor stopping at the Time Checkpoint in Lone Pine to serve his/her time penalty while the race clock continues. Failure to stop and serve a mandatory time penalty will result in disqualification.
5. The Race Director has the authority, at any time, to overrule any rule or invent a new rule based on extenuating, unforeseen, and/or unusual circumstances and/or to maintain the integrity and fair play necessary for the successful completion, and continuation, of the race. The Race Director has ultimate authority regarding all rules, their interpretation, and their enforcement. There is no “appeals committee” nor an “appeals process.” All Competitors in the race, and their support crews, willingly acknowledge this fact, as well as all other race rules, by attending the race in any capacity.
6. In all cases and circumstances, it is the intent, and spirit, of the rules which will govern their implementation and enforcement.

Finally

Have fun and keep smiling! Remember, you chose to be here!